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Airline's anniversary a year-long celebration



The Silver Bird, more commonly known as the Lockheed 10A, brought back memories of its glorious heyday as it made its coast-to-coast flight to celebrate the airline's fiftieth anniversary.

In honour of EXPO 86, which is dedicated to the theme of transportation and communications, Air Canada began celebrating its fiftieth birthday a year early.

Leading up to the airline's golden anniversary date on April 10, 1987, various activities and ceremonies were planned with two special events highlighting the celebrations: participation at EXPO 86 and a 31-day flight across the continent by one of the airline's original airplanes.

At the Vancouver exposition, Air Canada has the only aviation or airline pavilion on the site. Visitors can arrive at the pavilion in one of 66 gondolas in the mile-long Skyride, another major initiative sponsored by Air Canada at EXPO 86. The gondolas, bearing the company's red and white colours and maple leaf markings, offer a panoramic view of the entire exhibition grounds and the greater Vancouver area.

Inside the pavilion, Air Canada is presenting an elaborate, multi-screen presentation, *Kaleidoscope*, that uses 195 projectors, 65 screens, 16 000 slides and state-of-the-art laser technology to unfold a sight and sound retrospective of the role of the company and its personnel in the history

of Canadian aviation. While the presentation is compressed into 15 minutes, audiences experience the sensation of living in those decades that began in the pioneer days of pre-Second World War flying.

Commemorative flight

Prior to the May 2 opening of EXPO 86, Air Canada's commemorative transcontinental flight began on April 10. It was on that day in 1937 that the carrier was created under the name Trans-Canada Air Lines (TCA), a name that remained unchanged until 1965.

Also in 1937, on September 1, TCA operated its first scheduled passenger flight — a 50-minute trip from Vancouver to Seattle in the US state of Washington. The route had been acquired from Canadian Airways Ltd., along with two ten-seat Lockheed 10A *Electra* airplanes.

Canadian Airways, founded in 1930, was at the time the largest regional air company in the country.

Shortly after taking over the Seattle route, TCA bought three other new L-10As directly from Lockheed's plant. They were called the "three sisters" and bore the registration letters of CF-TCA, CF-TCB and CF-TCC.



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